

SUICIDE PREVENTION AND SEED DIGGING



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- ▶ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LF8_XJRqS_Y

SUICIDE PREVENTION

STATISTICS AND SUICIDE NUMBERS ARE TOO HIGH

WE MUST.....

See Children in a “new perspective” and identify when mental health issues are present

- ▶ **Early identification of children and teens with MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS is the best**
 - ▶ **SUICIDE prevention (look for “weeds”)**

BEGIN IDENTIFYING CHILDREN who have MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS

“Look for Weeds”

Watch for “outward” symptoms:

Kids who get in trouble often

Dropping grades

Hyperactivity/impulsivity

Inattention

Lying

Tantrums

Social withdrawal

Aggression

Bullying

Kids who cry easily (self-regulation)

kids who get lost in books/reading and don't socialize

get upset over trivial matters

kids who tend to worry often

kids who stay tired often

kids who have bruising or marks on their body

kids who wear heavy clothes in the heat

urinating or soiling pants

complains of stomach pains or headaches often

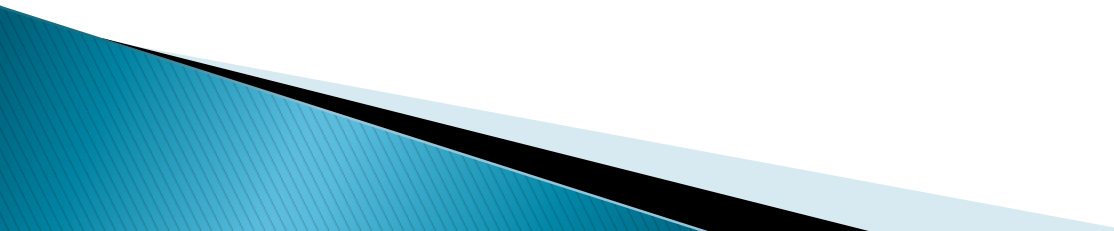
WATCH FOR “SUBTLE” SIGNS

Don't always assume the kids with the “obvious symptoms” are the only ones who need mental health intervention

- ▶ Watch for the children who have “perfectionist” behaviors and get upset for having “less than perfect” grades
- ▶ Watch for the children who “pretend” that everything is okay when something goes wrong and try to “avoid” the subject
- ▶ Watch for children to seem to “numb their feelings” or have a “lack of emotion.”
- ▶ Watch for the children who are “loners” and would prefer to stay by themselves and read books instead of socialize with other students
- ▶ Watch for the children who are loud and seeking attention “jokesters, drama queens”
- ▶ Watch for children who are “overachievers”
- ▶ **Watch for children who make statements of “hopelessness”**

UNDERSTANDING HOPELESSNESS

▶ DEFINITION

- ▶ Having no expectation of good or success.
 - ▶ Despairing
 - ▶ Not susceptible to “remedy or cure”
 - ▶ Giving no ground for “hope”
 - ▶ Desperate
 - ▶ Incapable of solution, management, or accomplishment...**IMPOSSIBLE**
- 

- ▶ **“HOPELESSNESS”** is a driver to **“SUICIDE”**
- ▶ When a child feels “helplessness” they can quickly move into “survival mode”
- ▶ Staying in SURVIVAL MODE leads to

DANGER!

HOPELESSNESS can lead to SUICIDE



Jason Foundation

www.jasonfoundation.com

▶ ***SUICIDE WARNING SIGNS***

- ▶ Talking about suicide
- ▶ Making Statements about feeling hopeless, helpless, or worthless
- ▶ A deepening depression
- ▶ Preoccupation with death—look for themes (journaling, verbalizations, drawing, etc)
- ▶ Taking unnecessary risks or exhibiting self-destructive behaviors
- ▶ Out of character behavior
- ▶ A loss of interest in the things one cares about
- ▶ Visiting or calling people one cares about
- ▶ Making arrangements, setting one's affairs in order
- ▶ Giving prized possessions away

- ▶ **REFER THE CHILD TO COUNSELING**
 - ▶ therapists
 - ▶ school counselors
 - ▶ counseling ministry

▶ **FIND HELP!**

▶ **USE WORDS AND ACTIONS TO HELP GET THEM OUT OF HOPELESS MODE!**

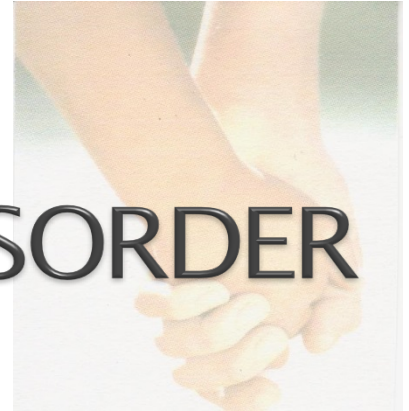
▶ **THE CAVE ANALOGY (instill HOPE)**

▶ **Seed Digging/Freedom Prayer**

CASE SCENARIO....

15-year-old male

OPPOSITIONAL DEFIANT DISORDER



- Extreme anger outbursts
- Defiant to authority figures
- Doesn't do his classwork nor his homework
- Smokes pot and drinks alcohol excessively
- Destroys property
- Bad attitude
- "Chip" on his shoulder

WHAT WAS REALLY GOING ON WITH THIS CHILD...
WHAT WAS THE "NEED" BEHIND THE "DEED?"..

- ▶ 1) parents fought continuously and violently and divorced when the child was young
- ▶ 2) mother left home when he was young and he rarely sees her
- ▶ 3) dad is emotionally and physically absent as well
- ▶ 4) child self-medicates on drugs and alcohol and acts out to help deal with the internal pain
- ▶ 5) He "gave up" a long time ago

SET A “SAFE” and “SECURE” ATMOSPHERE

- ▶ 1) Continuously speak and show unconditional acceptance, love, and security with children and teens.
 - ▶ “Pull weeds” with your words and actions.
- ▶ --listen to them (They will tell you what their “seeds are”)
- ▶ --watch them (They will “project” or “show you” their seeds)
- ▶ Be Creative and Intentional! Use Sticky Notes....

Counteract” those “seeds” or beliefs with positive words and actions AND PULL THOSE WEEDS!



HELP PLANT “HAPPY SEEDS” and “PULL WEEDS”



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3H50llsHm3k>



2) SEPARATE THE GARDEN FROM THE WEEDS

Discipline to Correct the Behaviors, not “change” the child

- ▶ **Separate the Actions from the Child**
 - ▶ **DO NOT BLEND**

- ILLOGICAL THINKING
- *Incorrect:* “You were a bad girl today” or “You were a good girl today”
- *Correct:* “Your actions were not kind today, but YOU ARE A GOOD GIRL”

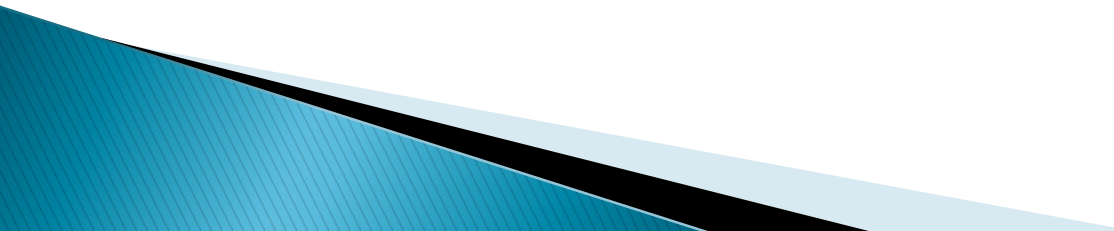
BELIEFS WILL LINE UP TO BEHAVIORS!!

“I am bad” (behaviors and actions will be bad)

“No one loves me” (behaviors will reflect the heart)

- Children cannot ALWAYS logically separate themselves from what they do
 - SO...
- We have to help them... **THE CHILD IS NOT THE WEED!** *We want the weed to be pulled and destroyed...not the child!*

EXAMPLES

- ▶ 1) Your heart is kind so let's train your hands to be as kind as your heart!
 - ▶ 2) You are a kind and respectful young man. Let's teach your words to be truthful like the good man that you are.
 - ▶ 3) Your word choices haven't been very nice today. You are a very nice girl so please use words that are as nice as you are.
 - ▶ 4) You are a wonderful person so please don't say mean things about yourself. I like you just the way you are.
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3) Validate and Reflect the child's feelings

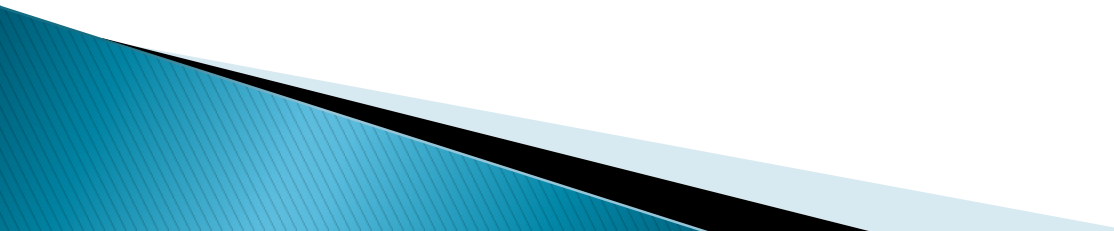
“Help them feel heard!”

- ▶ *“I can see you are very angry”*
- ▶ --help the child feel heard and give them a voice!
- ▶ --You don't have to agree with what they are saying, but let the child “feel” the way they need to feel.
- ▶ **SUBCONSCIOUS THINGS HAPPEN–It will come out one way or another!**
 - ▶ **TRAUMA REMINDERS (little boy at clinic, cologne)**
- ▶ Common belief or “seed” when a child doesn't feel heard...
 - ▶ **“What I say isn't important so I must not be important”**
 - ▶ **USE “I NEED” STATEMENTS**
- ▶ Children are accustomed to hearing “YOU NEED” statements. This puts them on the “defense” and can “water” that seed or makes them more angry or frustrated

CHILDREN ARE JUST “LITTLE PEOPLE”

- ▶ “Misbehavior in children is an attempt to communicate when all else has failed. Children have a drive to love other people and be a contribution to the people around them. It is time for all children to be recognized as the magnificent little people they are, and accorded the dignity and respect that is due every human being. We must establish a new way of seeing children.”
- ▶ –Rick Lahrson
- ▶ www.naturalchild.org

4) GIVE THEM OPTIONS

- ▶ Options can empower the child because they have other choices.
 - ▶ Give them a “safe” way to express themselves. Teach them more positive ways to do this until the “seed” is completely pulled from their gardens.
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EXAMPLES

Example: A Child is angry at another child and won't stop bothering her.

- ▶ **POSITIVE STATEMENT:**

- ▶ “I can see you are upset with Kari but I need you to stop making faces at her. Maybe you could write her a letter tonight to let her know how it made you feel or you could write a letter to me and tell me all about it.”

- ▶ **NEGATIVE STATEMENT:**

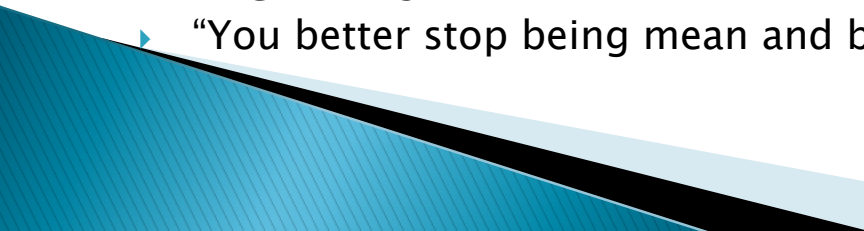
- ▶ “You better stop making faces at Kari or you are going to lose your star for the day.”

- ▶ **Example: Child is bullying the other children and laughing when they mess up.**

- ▶ **POSITIVE STATEMENT:**

- ▶ “You really are such an important person and I really need you to not laugh at the other kids because they are important too. If you find a funny book or hear a funny joke, I would love for you to share it with me later. I really enjoy funny things too.”

- ▶ **NEGATIVE STATEMENT:**

- ▶ “You better stop being mean and bullying the other kids or you're in big trouble.”
- 



A young girl was walking along a beach upon which thousands of starfish had been washed up during a terrible storm. When she came to each starfish, she would pick it up, and throw it back into the ocean. People watched her with amusement. She had been doing this for some time when a man approached her and said, “Little girl, why are you doing this? Look at this beach! You can’t save all these starfish. You can’t begin to make a difference!”

The girl seemed crushed, suddenly deflated. But after a few moments, she bent down, picked up another starfish, and hurled it as far as she could into the ocean. Then she looked up at the man and replied, “Well, I made a difference to that one!” The old man looked at the girl inquisitively and thought about what she had done and said. Inspired, he joined the little girl in throwing starfish back into the sea. Soon others joined, and all the starfish were saved.

— Adapted and from *The Star Thrower*
by Loren C. Eiseley



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